

Investiture of Justice Leslie King is April 13 in Jackson

April 4, 2011

An investiture ceremony for Mississippi Supreme Court Justice Leslie D. King is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. April 13 in the En Banc Courtroom of the Gartin Justice Building in Jackson.

Gov. Haley Barbour will be the keynote speaker. Rep. Percy W. Watson of Hattiesburg also will speak. Supreme Court Chief Justice Bill Waller Jr. will administer the oath of office.

The investiture will be webcast on the Supreme Court's Internet web site, www.mssc.state.ms.us.

Gov. Barbour appointed Justice King, 62, of Greenville, to the vacancy created by the departure of Justice James E. Graves Jr. Justice Graves was appointed to the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Justice King began his duties on the Supreme Court March 1. It is traditional to have a formal investiture ceremony at a later time.

Rev. Larry Story, Pastor of St. Matthew African Methodist Episcopal Church in Greenville, will give the opening prayer during the investiture. Presiding Justice Jess H. Dickinson of Gulfport will read scripture. Justice David A. Chandler of Ackerman will extend a welcome to the proceedings. Presiding Justice George C. Carlson Jr. of Batesville will recognize special guests. Justice James W. Kitchens of Crystal Springs will introduce Rep. Watson. Justice Michael K. Randolph of Hattiesburg will introduce Gov. Barbour.

The Rust College A'Cappella Choir will sing *The Star Spangled Banner* and *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*. Rep. Tyrone Ellis of Starkville will give the benediction.

Justice King, a former member of the Mississippi House of Representatives, began his legislative service in 1980, the same year as Representatives Watson and Ellis. Justice King served for 15 years in the House of Representatives, where he was vice-chair of the House Ways and Means Committee and vice-chair of the Conservation and Water Resources Committee.

He is a former Washington County Youth Court counselor, prosecutor and public defender, and former Metcalfe Municipal Judge.

Justice King was elected to the Court of Appeals in 1994 and began hearing cases in January 1995. He served as Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals from April 30, 2004, until March 1, 2011. At the time he left the Court of Appeals, he was its longest serving member, having been elected to the court at its inception.

Justice King is the fourth African-American justice to serve on the Mississippi Supreme Court. Justice Reuben V. Anderson of Jackson was the first African American to serve on the Supreme Court, holding office 1985-1990. Justice Fred L. Banks Jr. of Jackson served 1991-2001. Justice Graves, of Jackson, served from November 2001 through February 2011.

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